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AN ESSAY

ON

The Classification of Words  
Into Parts of Speech.



The Universal Law of all Languages  
applied to the English Tongue.

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## PREFACE.

If a person will take the trouble to examine several grammars by different authors, he will find the definitions of the Parts of Speech all somewhat vague, some ridiculous, none clear and accurate, and no two grammars exactly alike on this point.

Here are some of them :

“ An Adjective is a word which may limit the application of a noun to that which has the quality, the quantity, or the relation which the Adjective denotes (note, of course this does not apply to nouns that do not admit of limitation, such as proper nouns).” The same author on the preceding page gives this definition : “ An adjective is a word that may be used with a Noun to describe, to delimit, or to indicate that for which the Noun stands.” The paragraph following is as follows :

“ This may also be expressed by saying that an adjective is a word used with a Noun or Pronoun to denote some attribute of quantity, quality, or relation which marks that for which the Noun or Pronoun stands.” “ Note, beware of the absurdity of saying that an Adjective denotes the quality of a Noun.” “ When we speak of a red rose, the Adjective red does not denote the quality of the name rose, but of the thing for which the name stands.” “ The blunder is very obvious, but is committed in most English grammars.”

The first definition says nothing of Pronouns, while the third does. The first definition uses quantity, quality, and relation as limiting the noun ; the second adds describing, delimiting, and indicating ; the third, like the first, uses relation, without defining what relation, and, as all things are related in some manner, it leaves the definition as applicable to a Verb as to an Adjective.

The writer of this essay would have expected to have found the warning not to say “ an Adjective denotes the quality of

a Noun," as being absurd, the reason given and the example, in a comic paper under heading of "Height of Absurdity." The absurd blunder so comical is that a grammarian should overlook the very, very usual occurrence of communicating the idea of a thing by using its name.

Another definition: "A Verb is that part of speech by which we make an assertion," and the author immediately adds "it is the keystone of the arch of speech." To rebut this definition here is a sentence, and it is left to the reader to deny its asserting power, and to find the verb in it: "A locomotive in existence now, and in a state of motion on the rails." As to the keystone it is absurd, as every sentence can be constructed to communicate the same ideas without the use of a Verb.

The writer finds nearly all definitions like those given above. He cannot refrain from giving one more:

"A preposition is an indefinable word." This author was at least frank, and did much better than many authors who give a definition applicable to several other parts of speech, thereby mystifying the student and deceiving himself.

Again the writer finds wrong words and bad sentences declared right, because a classic author has used them, which is no reason at all.

Is a bad tool a good tool because a good mechanic has used it?

It appears to the writer that grammarians have taken each word, building laws of grammar very much like the old alchemists did with matter, without any fundamental law to guide them.

It is well to remember that language is a means of communicating ideas, and one person perceives what another means; and if a word is omitted, where a misunderstanding cannot occur, the end is achieved. Again, where a phrase is used that is in itself wrong, but still any construction of it but one would be absurd, it conveys the ideas desired all the same, and, therefore, for brevity's sake it is allowable.

In introducing a new law of language, it often shows expressions that are correct and unmistakable as to meaning, but which look odd because we are unfamiliar with them.

The classification given below is much simpler and clearer to the writer's mind. Whether it will be to others he does not know.

Before entering on the subject-matter of this essay it may be well to give a synopsis of grammar, in order that the reader may clearly know the subject under discussion.

The following synopsis is the best the writer knows :

FIRST.—Definition, which attaches to a given sound a given idea, or ideas, thereby changing the sound to a word.

It is the office of a dictionarian to list words and give their meanings.

SECOND.—Phonetics, which comprises the rules of uttering words, including their accent.

THIRD.—Orthography, which attaches written signs, letters, to each sound, thereby forming written words.

FOURTH.—Parts of Speech. After knowing words (that is, sounds that each has one or more ideas attached to it), it is necessary to classify them in accordance with their meaning and use.


FIFTH.—Syntax. The rules of arranging words (ideas, parts of speech) to communicate thought, as a mason arranges stones to produce a building.

SIXTH.—Oratory. The utterance of words in a manner to be most pleasing to, and effective on, the hearer, and consistent with thought.

SEVENTH.—Prosody. The arrangement of words in verse, metre, or rhyme, consistent with the thought.

EIGHTH.—Etymology. The history of each word, and how they have changed the spelling and meaning during their existence.

It will be observed that the subject-matter of this essay relates to the fourth division.



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# PART I.

## CLASSIFICATION OF WORDS INTO PARTS OF SPEECH.

All true words express one or more ideas ; we classify them in accordance with their ideas as to number and meaning.

The parts of speech are :

Nouns,

Numerals,

Positionals,

Temporals,

Adjectives,

Verbs,

Adverbs,

Pronouns,

Frasals,

Interjections.

We will take them up in order.

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### DEFINITION OF A NOUN.

As stated before, all words express one or more ideas. Every idea can be conceived of alone.

*A Noun* is the name of whatever may be conceived of alone as a whole.

*A Proper Noun* is the name of an individual person, place, or thing, that is of an individual Noun.

If we conceive of a “man,” although a very complicated being, we conceive of him alone as a whole, unconnected with anything else, and so with all entities.

If we conceive of whiteness or goodness, they are unconnected with anything else. What is white or good is not expressed ; so with all qualities.

If we conceive of motion or thought, they are unconnected with anything else, what is moving or thinking is not expressed ; so with all activities.

If we conceive of a crowd, herd, etc., it is alone as a whole that we conceive of it.

An entity (from an atom to the Lord) can only be described by qualities or activities.

The three above classes of Nouns, namely, entities, qualities, and activities, as far as the human mind has developed, are found in complete dictionaries.

The following three classes of Nouns are not found in the dictionaries, because they are very seldom used, and when required a substitute is employed. They are :

*First*, Nouns of Number. We coin them by adding “ness” to them. We can conceive of halfness, oneness, tenness, etc., unconnected with anything else, just as well as we can conceive of whiteness or motion.

*Second*, Nouns of Position. We coin them by adding “ness” to them. We can conceive of nearness (proximity), belowness, aboveness, etc., without any knowledge of what things are near, above, or below, just as we conceive of whiteness, etc.

*Third*, Nouns of Time. We coin them by adding “ness.” We can conceive of pastness, futureness (futuraity), nowness, etc., without knowing what events occurred in said times.

We have endeavoured to show that every conception can be conceived of alone, and the names of all conceptions conceived of alone are Nouns.

Every other part of speech must contain more than one idea.

## REMARKS.

We have seen that nouns express one idea alone.



Every other word must express more than one idea, and those ideas must be noun ideas joined together in one word.

Their use is to connect Nouns together, to build a sentence, as mortar, glue, nails, etc., connect stone, brick, lumber, etc., together, to build a house; each producing very different results from the original material used.

This is done by the use of eight classes of words. They are:

Numerals,  
Positionals,  
Temporals,  
Adjectives,  
Verbs,  
Adverbs,  
Pronouns,  
Frasals.

The first six of these classes are inflections regular or irregular of nouns (many nouns are not in the dictionary). We will take them up in order.

## DEFINITION OF NUMERALS.

*Numerals.* The Nouns are halfness, oneness, tenness, etc., the numerals, having dropped the "ness," then contain the two ideas, one of its Noun, the other that the idea of its noun is attached to other Noun or Nouns, thereby signifying the number of said Nouns, they are definite and indefinite. In the multiplication table we say ten times ten are one hundred; as ten and one hundred are numerals signifying that some other Nouns have their numbers, we can only analyze this by supposing Nouns are understood, as ten times ten apples are one hundred apples. If we used the Nouns, the sentence would be "ten times tenness

be one hundredness," nothing understood. Pair and dozen are names of numbers.

Here follows a partial list of numerals.

Cardinal numbers.

Decimal numbers.

Fractional numbers.

A	Indefinite one
An	Indefinite one
Another	Any other, one more, not the same one
Any	
Both	
Each	Every one of two or more individuals
Either	One out of two
Enough	
Every	
Few	
Many, more, most	
Neither	
No	Not any
None	
Other	Not this
Only	
Or	Other out of two
Plenty	
Several	
Single	
Some	
The	Definite one
Whether	One of two or more, which one of two

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#### DEFINITION OF POSITIONALS.

*Positionals.* As we have seen, nearness, aboveness, etc., are the Nouns. We drop the "ness," and near, etc., contains two

ideas—that of its Noun and that it is joined to other Nouns, signifying the relations of position of the other Nouns. If we say “the nearness (proximity) of those trees in the forest is remarkable,” the sense is the same as “the trees in the forest are remarkably near together.” In one sentence the Noun is employed, in the other the positional is used.

Here follows a partial list of positionals :

Ordinal numbers.

aboard	betwixt
about	beyond
above	by (near)
across	down
apart	east
after	far
against	farther
almost	forward
along	from
amid	further
amidst	here
among	in
amongst	into
astern	just (almost)
around	near
at	next
athwart	nigh
away	north
back	of (from)
backward	off
before	on
behind	out
below	over
beneath	past
beside	round

between	south	
thither	there	
through	until	
throughout	west	
together	with	
toward	without	
towards	within	
underneath	where	
unto	wherein	
up	whereat	
upon	whereto	whither.

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### DEFINITION OF TEMPORALS.

*Temporals.* We have seen the Nouns pastness, nowness, futureness, etc. If we say “the past brought pleasant recollections,” we must understand “the past time brought pleasant recollections.” If we said “pastness brought present recollections,” we use the Noun; but past, being a temporal, signifies some other Noun was in the past—as past thoughts. We have dropped the “ness” from the noun and have the temporal.

The word “be,” a noun in its true meaning, is used only in a few philosophical axioms, which show that every conception must be, and therefore it is unnecessary to use it after any Noun to indicate that the Noun be. In consequence the so-called Verb “to be” in all its forms has come only to signify time or continuance of time, except in a few cases where it means become.

Here follows a partial list of Temporals :

Inflections of Verbs, present tense meaning present time.

Special word Do, present tense meaning present time.

Inflections of Verbs, past tense meaning past time.

Special word Did, past tense meaning past time.

Examples :	Add	present	added	past
	do add	present	did add	past
	differ	present	{ differed did differ }	past

(Note : Better explained when Verbs are treated of).

As "to be" and "to have" (not meaning to hold or possess) have lost their meaning, except as to time, we give them in this list :

being,	continuance	
be,	occurring at	any time
am, art, is, are	occurring at	present time
was, wast, were,	occurring at	past time
have, hast, has, had, been,	occurring and completed in past tense.	

When we separate the temporal from the inflected Verb, it gives an idea of continuance.

Example : I write or I wrote have no idea of continuance ;  
but I am writing, or I was writing, carry the  
idea the writing would continue.

Other temporals are : will, and will be, meaning future time  
(not the words meaning determination), and

after	seldom
already	since
always	soon
ago	still
anon	then
before	till
bye and bye	to-day
during	to-morrow
early	until
ere	when
ever (during)	while
formerly	
late, now, often, yet	

## DEFINITION OF ADJECTIVES.

*An Adjective* is an inflection of a Noun, regular or irregular, meaning that some Noun has the quality of the Noun of which it is the inflection. We can always substitute for an Adjective the words “with quality” and the Noun of the Adjective, whatever that may be.

Example: If we say “black horse” it means “horse with quality blackness.”

Note: A state of being is a quality, and therefrom the Adjective, never a Verb.

## DEFINITION OF VERBS.

*A Verb* is an inflection of a Noun (the inflection always ends in “ing,” and is the Verb proper without time or other ideas connected with it) meaning some Noun is in the state of activity of the Noun of which it is the inflection. We can always substitute for a Verb the words “in state of activity,” and the Noun of the Verb, whatever it may be.

Example: John moving means John in state of activity, movement.

Often the English language has no Noun form different from the Verb, and it is indicated as a Noun by its position or an adjunct word.

Example: The working of a mine, etc., Noun; the mine working produced, etc., Verb.

Verbs have a few inflections of their own denoting time and purpose.

Example: The Verb proper, with no ideas other than some other Noun is in the state of love, is

Loving	simple Verb.
Love	now loving.
Do love	now loving.

Loved	in the past loving.
Did love	in the past loving.
Will love	in the future loving.
To love	purpose (aim, object, etc.) loving.

Loved is wrong in accordance with the principles of the English language. It is really the sign of the passive voice, custom alone permitting its use, the correct past tense being "did love."

In the infinitive mood "to" is always a Noun, meaning purpose, aim, object, destination, etc.; the Verb that follows the "to," which is always the same as the present tense, like it, always means the simple Verb in "ing," see above, and

Examples: To remark equals purpose remarking. "He likes to run," means he likes (what is the purpose or object of his liking, of course running) purpose running.

## DEFINITION OF ADVERBS.

*An Adverb* is an inflection of a Noun regular or irregular, that means a numeral, positional, temporal, Adjective, Verb, or other Adverb is described by its (the Adverb's) Noun.

Examples :

Numeral	<i>Nearly</i> ten apples are on the table.
Positional	The tree stands <i>exactly over</i> a stone.
Temporal	It was <i>extremely late</i> when he came.
Adjective	A remarkably black cat.
Verb	He runs slowly.
Adverb	It is entirely nicely done.

## DEFINITION OF PRONOUNS.

Pronouns stand for Nouns. They are used for Nouns to prevent repetition. Some of them stand for a phrase or sentence.

## PARTIAL LIST OF PRONOUNS.

I	They	My	Mine	Thee	Who
We	One	Thy	Thine	Him	Which
Thou	None	His	Yours	Them	What
You		Hers	Theirs	That	Who ?
He		Its	Me	This	Which ?
She		Ours	Us	Those	What ?
It				These	

## DEFINITION OF FRASALS.

*Frasal Words* are words that take the place of a phrase. As all words can be defined and the definitions used to replace them, it may be said that all words are frasals. Therefore frasals are words that have not been classified among the other parts of speech, and always take the place of a phrase, or can be replaced by one of the other classified words. Often they have two or more meanings. Sometimes the idea conveyed by, and the use of, the frasal word, are those of one of the foregoing classes of words. Then it belongs to both classes according to the idea.

Example : "By," meaning near, a positional ; meaning through agency of, a frasal.

There are less than sixty frasals in the English language. As their meanings are various, to form a clause that takes the place of one, each must be slightly varied in form but not in essential meaning. The numbers opposite each one in the following list are the numbers of different meanings each have according to Webster's Dictionary.

## PARTIAL LIST OF FRASALS.

## POTENTIALS.

Can	Means with ability.
Could	Means with ability on certain conditions.



May	Means with ability with a possibility of doing.
Might	Means with ability with a possibility of doing on certain conditions.
Must	Means with ability under compulsion of force.
Shall	Means with ability and determination derived from person speaking.
Should	Means with ability under compulsion of duty.
Would	Means with ability and performance on certain conditions occurring.

Note.—The potentials have been wrongly called heretofore Auxiliary Verbs. There is no activity expressed by them, but only potency. They should never be considered as verbs. They are followed by the infinitive mood.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

	<i>Meaning.</i>	<i>Example.</i>
Also. 2.	In like manner.	There will be your heart also.
	In addition.	Our situation has discomforts, it has also enjoyments.
	Likewise—Too.	I was there also.
And. 4.	In addition	John and Henry went to town.
As. 10.	Similar to, etc.	You will reap as you sow.
	That.	They are so uncertain as they require attention.
	While.	He trembled as he spoke.
Because. 2.	For reason that.	The multitude rebuked them because they should hold their peace.
Besides. 3.	Over and above.	There was a famine in the land beside the first.
But. 6.	Solely, only.	Observe but how their own principles combat one another.
	Except.	Who can it be but John.

*Meaning.**Example.*

By. 6.	Through agency of.	A novel by Dickens.
Except. 2.	Unless.	Except it be her tongue so glib.
	Left out.	I have finished all the letters except one.
Even. 12.	In same manner.	Even so did these Gauls possess the coast.
For. 11.	In place of.	I give this for that.
	To benefit.	This is for you.
No.	The reverse.	
Of. 12.	From.	Born of the spirit.
	Concerning.	I thought of you.
	Belonging to.	Knife of John.
	Originated by.	Works of Shakespeare.
If. 2.	On condition.	If thou wilt.
	Whether.	Uncertain if by augury or chance.
Lest. 2.	For fear that.	Love not sleep lest thou come to poverty.
	That.	Lest I might anger thee.
Like. 3.	Same appearance as.	He looks like me.
	In a manner similar to.	Do not act like that.
	Probably.	Like enough it will.
Or. 1.	It may be.	It is gold or silver.
Ought.	Owe—duty.	He ought to read more.
Over. 7.	Finished.	The distress was over.
	During.	To keep corn over winter.
	More than quantity assigned.	He that gathereth much has nothing over.
Perhaps. 1.	By chance.	If perhaps the room is cold.
Save. 1.	Except.	Received forty stripes save one.
Still. 6.	Nevertheless.	You say no, still I will do it.
Since. 4.	Because.	Since you like it.

<i>Meaning.</i>	<i>Example.</i>
Such. 4. So shaped.	One such look is enough.
So. 12. In that manner.	Why is his chariot so long coming ?
High degree.	He is so good.
Than. 2. In comparison to.	It is wiser being good than bad.
In place of.	I would rather suffer than you.
Therefore. For this or that reason.	I have a wife, therefore I cannot go.
Though. 2. Granting.	Though he slay me, yet I will trust him.
However.	A good cause would do well, though.
To. 11. Comparison.	It is ten to one you offend him.
Too. 2. More than enough.	Too long.
Likewise.	A brave man and honest too.
Thus. In this or that manner.	
Unless. 4. If it be not.	We shall fail unless we are industrious.
Well. 5. Not a little.	He was well stricken with years.
About.	I will come well at 10 o'clock.
Yes. 3. I consent.	
I affirm it.	
Yet. 6. In addition.	Yet a little longer.
Nevertheless.	Yet I say unto you.

### DEFINITION OF INTERJECTIONS.

*Interjections.* An Interjection is not a word in its proper sense.

There are two kinds—one a noise made by the voice to attract attention, like hallo, hi, etc. They communicate no idea,

for if one had a tin pan and hit it with a stick it would do as well, attract attention.

If you do not wish to attract the attention of others, but only one party, you say "hist." A string reaching to the party and pulled would do as well.

The other kind of Interjection is an expression of feeling not intended to communicate a thought or feeling, but showing feeling on the part of the utterer, as ah! oh! surprise; pooh! contempt; auch! pain, etc.

They are not words properly speaking, but sounds that show the state of feeling, just as a blush or paleness does to the eye.

When Interjections are spoken of we imitate the sound and use it as a Noun and can verbalize it.

## PART II.

### GENERAL REMARKS.

This classification of Parts of Speech changes the old present participle into the verb proper, and the past participle into the passive voice sign.

Articles become numerals.

Prepositions become mostly positionals, and a few become frasals.

Conjunctions become frasals.

Everything must be, or be the manifestation of a being, and therefore have being in it, whereby it be, whether it be any physical thing from an atom to man; whether it be a spiritual thing or the Infinite all; or whether it be the most shadowy conception or the most complex great first cause.

Consequently "to be" and all its forms have become temporals.

You can always put a time idea in its place, and the sense is perfect except when it is used in the place of become, or is a noun.

Nouns might be classified as

Proper Nouns,	Nouns of Number,
Nouns of Entities,	Nouns of Position,
Nouns of Qualities,	Nouns of Time.
Nouns of Activities,	

All verbalized nouns that are not nouns of activity take in the verb an additional meaning of power.

Example :

Nearing the shore.

Coming or going near the shore.

Levelling.

Making level, etc.

The spirit of the English language is to do away with declination of nouns and conjugation of verbs. The former only exists in the pronouns, and possessive case of nouns, the latter in the present tense of verbs and in the incorrect "ed" as a past tense, which is really the sign of the passive voice, the correct past tense being did, was, etc.

The subjunctive mood is no longer in use, except in some isolated cases, it is nearly obsolete.

It is rarely one hears "If I were." "If I was" is correct because in "If I were" the condition is duplicated, being in "if" and in "were," which is useless.

The list of numerals, positionals, temporals, pronouns, and frasals are not completed. They are only those the writer could call up from his memory, the dictionary not having been gone over.

The sentence "He has loved" was formerly written "He has love did," meaning the loving was completed.

### DID, WILL, AND SHALL.

Very naturally, as all past occurrences are done at the present time, the past tense of doing, did, has become the sign of past time, a temporal.

The sentence "I did go to town" means I doing in the past going to town. Now if one is going he is doing, and did as doing is useless, and is only a temporal.

In like manner, as all future occurrences can only be willed at the present time to occur, will has become a sign of the future time, a temporal.

Shall should never be used as a sign of the future, because it means "with ability and determination originating from speaker."

In the sentence "I shall go to town," it means I, with ability and determination, etc., purpose going to town, no time being expressed at all.

Note: "To" means purpose, aim, object, destination, etc.

It may be observed, that this essay shows that all ideas can be communicated with four Parts of Speech, namely, nouns, numerals, positionals, and temporals.

The other Parts of Speech are only modes (short cuts) to save words and repetitions.

Some languages have no verbs.

This essay is based on what man can think of, namely:

*First.* Things that have "being," or supposed "being," that is entities.

*Second.* We can only be conscious of an entity in two ways, one by states of its being, which is a quality.

*Third.* And by states of its activity, that is, what it is doing. If we consider entities excluding entirely any thought of their activities and qualities we can conceive of only three things about them, namely:

*Fourth.* We can number them.

*Fifth.* We can think of their relation to each other as to position.

*Sixth.* We can think of their position in the current of events, hence their time.

The author hopes this classification of Parts of Speech may be as clear to others as to himself.



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